



We promote public safety and challenge offenders to become responsible productive citizens.

*Alternatives, Inc.*  
*Passages Women's Center*  
*Alpha House Pre-release Center*  
*Billings, MT*

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Alternatives, Inc. has worked hand in hand with the Department of Corrections for 33 years to provide supervision for offenders in the Billings community. **Upon its opening in 1980, the Alpha House Pre-release was Montana's first non-profit pre-release center.**

Alternatives, Inc. has frequently been challenged to do more with less, but has always found a way to meet the Department's needs, such as:

- Providing residential services for offenders;
- Serving as an intake unit for the state (female offenders);
- Helping to stabilize struggling probation and parole offenders through Enhanced Supervision;
- Offering lower cost services such as Transitional Living;
- Providing low cost counseling services.

**Today, the agency serves over 320 residential clients each day and offers jail alternatives to over 6,000 clients annually.**

Community corrections placements are generally less expensive than incarceration in a prison facility. Additionally, offenders in community placements are employed, supporting families, paying medical expenses and taxes, and contributing to up to \$14.00 per day toward the cost of their supervision and counseling.

**Alternatives, Inc.'s residential clients will earn approximately \$3.5 million in wages during the current year.**

## **In the current biennium...**

- The Department of Corrections received an appropriation equivalent to a 1% increase in pre-release center per diem.
- This increase was effective only during the last (current) year of the biennium.
- Treatment programs such as Passages, Nexus, Elkhorn, WATCh, etc. received no increase in per diem.

**There are only two ways for a non-profit pre-release treatment center to maintain service levels, address increased operating costs, and to provide pay raises to staff...**

- Increases in per diem;
- Expansion of services.

**Cuts to community corrections in HB2 drive at the heart of the financial well being of non-profits and the identified needs of the Department of Corrections for cost effective services.**

- The 2% per diem increase for each year of the biennium is more than offset at Alpha House by a reduction in pre-release bedspace.
- Transitional Living is cost effective at 1/2 to 1/3 the cost of a residential placement. Removal of ten Transitional Living beds (5 at Alpha House) will lengthen stays in pre-release.
- The Licensed Certified Professional Counselor position eliminated from the request for Passages will leave it as the only pre-release center without these services.
- With a waiting list of nearly 40 women in county jails, the reduction of 15 proposed bedspaces for women to 5 will increase the time that these offenders are without treatment services while costing nearly the same amount of money.